SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION FROM AFTPS

AFTPS is a group set up by Scottish freelancers to provide advocacy, leadership and strategy on behalf of professional film and television practitioners. We are ambitious for Scotland, and for the talents of our members.

After the EET meeting with members of the Scottish Government’s public agencies Creative Scotland and Scottish Enterprise on the 10th of February 2016, we look forward to hearing further on the progress of support for the creative industries from the Cabinet minister on the 9th of March 2016.

The prevarication and dithering by the two public agencies in relation to a purpose built Scottish national film studio, and the low ambition of a make do and mend attitude, has left those working in the Scottish Film and television industry with serious doubts as to their competence in developing the future growth of the Scottish film industry. Developing this industry would provide skilled, quality, well paid jobs for many Scots. It would contribute to the economy creating wealth and inward investment, support the wellbeing of family livelihoods, and be a source of communal national pride.

We need to step up our game and a permanent purpose built studio in Scotland with 6 sound stages will help to achieve this.

Throughout the world, where there is a successful industry there is one solid anchor: The existence of a purpose built permanent studio. It is the first building block.

While the capital costs of a purpose built studio are greater than that of a reconstructed ‘shed’ the maintenance costs are much less. The maintenance costs of a reconstructed space are much greater and will be ongoing for many years. In relation to resource provision it is important to remember that the umbrella world of Film & TV production is a spectrum: major motion feature film, medium feature film, small feature film, international TV, TV drama, documentary drama,low budget feature film, commercials, short film, student film, education and training.

AFTPS members have worked in studios all over the world. They recognise that a studio complex with a backlot and six stages varying in size, would not only offer appropriate facilities to produce a single major motion feature film with an average budget of £100 million using all six stages at once, but would have the flexibility and diversity to simultaneously accommodate separate medium feature films with using two stages each. The variation in the size of stages and therefore rental price gives a plethora of opportunity to one-off television dramas and low budget features averaging budgets from £1 million to £8 million that also require a sound stage. Commercials, a thriving industry in Scotland, would not be using studios in Manchester or Prague.

Currently in Scotland there is a proposal funded with private money to provide such a facility. Such a studio would be a magnet for the development of further services for example post production facilities, dubbing theatres, and cutting rooms.
Our ambition in Scotland should be to make productions of the highest quality. This involves an approach that is more global and international. To grow our own Scottish industry we need to engage with a strong international industry. It is not one or the other. One of the key things about developing grass roots talent is for that talent to not only have the opportunity to experience regular employment, but to be able to work with and learn from international filmmakers at the top of their game, and to see that there is room for growth and development in Scottish independent filmmaking.

Our pride and success as Scottish filmmakers is connected to our scenery, our writers, our directors, our producers, our Scottish film crews and our actors many of whom are currently functioning on the international stage and express their Scottishness in doing so. Scotland ought to be able to offer these professionals more opportunity to work in Scotland itself.

The production of such quality and international and global reach requires financial investment. If we can achieve the above then we are much more likely to achieve our fair share of film industry spend in Scotland in comparison with other parts of the UK.

With our present attitude and low ambition for resources our current spend is only 3% of the UK spend: and this is in supposedly our best year yet. We think this is pitiful.

Having high ambition for our film industry will attract inward investment which will support our growth.

Yours sincerely

Association of Film & Television Practitioners Scotland (AFTPS)